



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/589,989	01/11/2007	Paolo Monti	294552US6X PCT	2476
22850	7590	11/17/2008		
OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C. 1940 DUKE STREET ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314			EXAMINER ANDRISH, SEAN D	
			ART UNIT 3672	PAPER NUMBER
			NOTIFICATION DATE 11/17/2008	DELIVERY MODE ELECTRONIC

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

patentdocket@oblon.com  
oblonpat@oblon.com  
jgardner@oblon.com

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b> 10/589,989	<b>Applicant(s)</b> MONTI ET AL.	
	<b>Examiner</b> SEAN D. ANDRISH	<b>Art Unit</b> 3672	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 17 - 32 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 17 - 32 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 18 August 0206 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____. |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                                  | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application                       |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____. | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____.  |

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Drawings***

1. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the “carrying structure” as recited in claim 19, the “foundations” as recited in claim 27, the “supporting rollers” as recited in claim 29, and the “mud-muts or suction piles” as recited in claim 32 must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as “amended.” If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either “Replacement Sheet” or “New Sheet” pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 17, 18, 24, 26, 27, 31, and 32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Bertaccini (4,147,455).

Regarding claims 17, 18, 27, and 32, Bertaccini discloses a support comprising: a structure (1) with a simple or lattice framework with foundations; an upper surface (3) tilted transversely with respect to the direction of the pipeline (2); and a pipeline (2) resting on the upper surface of the structure (1) (Figs. 1 and 2; column 3, lines 33 – 43).

Regarding claims 24, 26, and 31, Bertaccini further discloses the final section of the upper surface of the support is counter inclined (wedge 10) (Fig. 1).

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 19, 29, and 30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bertaccini in view of Recalde (5,533,834).

Regarding claims 19 and 30, Bertaccini discloses all of the limitations of the above claim(s) except for funnels. Recalde teaches funnels (lateral deflector plates 532S, 532P) (Fig.

Art Unit: 3672

26; column 23, lines 39 - 42) to counter greater lateral loadings that tend to laterally displace a pipe positioned on a pipe support structure. It would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to have modified the structure as disclosed by Bertaccini with the lateral deflector plates as taught by Recalde to counter greater lateral loadings that tend to laterally displace a pipe positioned on a pipe support structure.

Regarding claim 29, Bertaccini discloses all of the limitations of the above claim(s) except for friction between the upper surface and the pipeline is defined by rollers. Recalde teaches rollers (526) (Fig. 26) to support the pipeline during laying thereof against static and dynamic loadings and to provide additional control over the process by which a pipeline is positioned on a seabed. It would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to have modified the structure as disclosed by Bertaccini with the rollers as taught by Recalde to support the pipeline during laying thereof against static and dynamic loadings and to provide additional control over the process by which a pipeline is positioned on a seabed.

6. Claims 20 – 23, 25, and 28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bertaccini.

Regarding claim 20, Bertaccini discloses all of the limitations of the above claim(s) except for at least part of the structures on the carrying structure are removed after the pipelines have been rested on the upper surfaces. It would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to have modified the structure as disclosed by Bertaccini to include removable structures so that the support structure can be used

Art Unit: 3672

at multiple locations within the support system to meet the design requirements of a given scenario.

Regarding claims 21 and 22, Bertaccini discloses all of the limitations of the above claim(s) except for the range of inclination angles. Where the range of article sizes disclosed in the prior art envelopes the recited range, and there is no showing of criticality of the recited range, such recited range would have been one of ordinary skill in the art. In re Reven, 390 F.2d 997, 156 USPQ 679 (CCPA 1968).

Regarding claims 23 and 25, Bertaccini discloses all of the limitations of the above claim(s) except for the upper surface of the support has either a constant inclination or a succession of sections with a varying inclination alternating with horizontal stretches. Examiner takes official notice that the inclination(s) of the upper surface of the support is selected to provide controlled lateral movement of the pipeline on the support structure for a given scenario as a matter of design choice within the skill of the art.

Regarding claim 28, Bertaccini discloses all of the limitations of the above claim(s) except for an upper surface coated with material having a defined friction coefficient. It would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the structure as disclosed by Bertaccini with a coated upper surface of the support to define a friction coefficient that provides for controlled lateral movement of a pipe section on the support structure, the coefficient being defined to meet the design requirements for a given scenario.

Art Unit: 3672

***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to SEAN D. ANDRISH whose telephone number is (571)270-3098. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon - Fri, 7:30am - 5:00pm, Alternate Fri off, EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Bagnell can be reached on (571) 272-6999. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Sunil Singh/  
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3672

Sunil Singh  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 3672

SDA  
11/5/2008